



INSTANT VIEW: Reaction to Obama's Russia speech

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MOSCOW (Reuters) - Following are market watchers' comments on a speech by U.S. President [Barack Obama](#) to Russian students in Moscow on Tuesday.

PETER HALLORAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, PHAROS FINANCIAL GROUP

"If you look at the way the Russian markets trade, there is a huge political component to the discount rate which comes from the attitude of Western investors."

"He is clearly reaching out. What we will get is the political pendulum swinging back, which will take some of the pressure off the discount rate. You get a six-month honeymoon, is the way I see it."

SERGEI MARKOV, PRO-KREMLIN LAWMAKER AND HEAD OF INSTITUTE OF

POLITICAL RESEARCH, MOSCOW

"It seems to be he did not answer the fundamental question. Why there is such anti-Americanism in the world? It also exists in Russia for specific reasons. The world is not to blame for this anti-Americanism. He didn't have an answer for that.

"A more specific question is why is there anti-Americanism in Russia. It exists because of the aggressive policies of Americans in the post-Soviet space. The real Russophobia is there, in the American political class. There was no answer to that main question. I'm not convinced that Obama particularly has one.

"The United States is convinced that Russia's influence should be limited to within its borders. That it should not be surrounded by friendly states but by regimes hostile to Russia, controlled by Washington."

YEVGENY VOLK, HERITAGE FOUNDATION, MOSCOW

"I believe it's a strong message about liberty and the values which are inherent for American society and that was the main goal -- to confirm American values, like freedom, and an open and transparent economy.

"I certainly believe he tried to avoid direct criticism of Russia's situation and this country's kind of crony capitalism, but I see the signals on those issues in his speech. For example, he mentioned issues like the lack of property rights and lack of business protection."

SERGEI MARKADANOV, INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL AND MILITARY

ANALYSIS, MOSCOW

"The speech could be characterized as containing some compromise message, but it did not deal with many disputed areas. For my country, the situation in Ukraine and Georgia is not the same as in the rest of Eastern Europe as they are our near neighbors."

"The results of the first visit are preliminary and a 'reset' is not just one meeting of the presidents of the U.S. and Russia; it's a process. Diplomacy is not only linked to leaders, but to diplomats and everyday things. We are only just at the beginning.

"Not all the priorities can be considered as common between our countries. Two weeks after Obama's visit, the U.S. vice president, [Joe Biden](#), will go to Kiev and Tbilisi to show that the 'reset' of relations between U.S. and Russia will not lead to a worsening of relations between them and Washington."

CHRISTOPHER GRANVILLE, TRUSTED SOURCES RESEARCH, LONDON

"This is reminiscent of the type of rhetoric we were familiar with during the Clinton era in the 1990s, of turning a new page, of a new partnership with Russia.

"What's noticeable is that, unlike those years and especially the following Bush years, democracy is not mentioned prominently as a condition for a partnership with America. The message seems to be that the outcome is what matters, that Russia must be a successful country at ease with itself, rather than the U.S. telling Russia the approved routes to reach a desirable solution.

"It's no longer counter-productive lecturing from abroad. Implicitly, it contains the building blocks for an open and accountable society based on the rule of law, so it looks like Obama is going upstream to the roots of democratic values. In Russia, the word 'democrat' has become a code for those who promote the interests of the United States."

REINHARD KRUMM, HEAD OF EBERT THINK TANK, MOSCOW

"I think it's a very inspiring speech. There are two important points for Russians: That we're in a complex world and therefore one country can't do things alone. And, secondly, he's telling young Russians that they must decide what comes next.

"Looking back at what other American politicians have said about Russia, it's a very reasonable speech. Considering the extremely difficult relations the United States has with Russia, I think under these circumstances it is well written and balanced."

(Reporting by Conor Sweeney; additional reporting by Melissa Akin and Conor Humphries; Editing by Mark Trevelyan)